

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/765,594

Examiner

Ernesto Garcia

Applicant(s)

AOTA ET AL.

Art Unit

3679

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment after final filed on 2/21/07 and the examiner-initiated interview on 2/29/07.

2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-18.

3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:

1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.

5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.

(a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached

1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.

(b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____

4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material

5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application

6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.

7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment

8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

9. ☐ Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Thomas J. Bean on March 1, 2007.

The application has been amended as follows:
in the claims:

- claim 1, line 12 – added a comma after “joint”,
- line 13 – deleted the first occurrence of “and” and replaced the semicolon with --, and a supported portion;--,
- line 14 – replaced “a” with --the--; and
- claim 10, line 15 – added --respectively-- after “is”.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:
regarding claim 1, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest a coupling structure comprising a plate body having a flexible member, a curved portion, and a

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supported portion having a projection incised into at least one of a shaft joint and a locking body (lines 11-12, and lines 13-14 as amended by examiner's amendment to avoid a double inclusion discrepancy) in combination with a positioning recess of a shaft body (line 12) and a slip-off preventing groove in the shaft body (line 2). The closes prior art, Sekine et al., teach a slip-off preventing groove only and does not require a positioning recess in addition to the slip-off preventing groove;

regarding claims 2-9, these claims directly or indirectly depend from claim 1;

regarding claim 10, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest a coupling structure comprising a supported portion extending from a curved portion of a plate body and having projection in combination with both a shaft joint body and a locking body each having a recessed portion into which one of the projections is fitted. There is no motivation absent applicant's own disclosure to modify Sekine et al. because Aota et al., as modified by Sekine et al., teach a recessed portion on a locking body only;

regarding claims 2-9, these claims directly or indirectly depend from claim 1; and,

regarding claims 11-18, these claims depend from claim 10.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ernesto Garcia whose telephone number is 571-282-7083. The examiner can normally be reached from 9:30-5:30. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached at 571-272-7087.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

E.G.

E.G.

March 1, 2007



DANIEL P. STODOLA
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3800